WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. An image-forming apparatus with a
hardware resource used for image formation, a program
for performing processing related to the image
formation, and a communication part, the image-
10 forming apparatus comprising:

a format information acquisition part that
acquires format information from an apparatus
connected to the image-forming apparatus via the
communication part, the format information including
15 information on a format of image data supportable by
the connected apparatus;

a format determination part that determines
a transfer-time format of image data to be
transferred to the connected apparatus based on the
20 acquired format information; and

an image data conversion part that performs
format conversion of the image data to be transferred
to the connected apparatus in accordance with the
determined transfer-time format of the image data.

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2. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising an apparatus selection part that selects one or more from a plurality of apparatuses connected to the image-forming apparatus
5   via the communication part.

10   3. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said apparatus selection part selects the one or more apparatuses based on an input by an operator.

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4. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said apparatus selection part
20 selects the one or more apparatuses based on information input to the image-forming apparatus.

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5. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format information acquisition part acquires the format information by making a request to the connected apparatus for the format information.

6. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format information includes at least one of: information indicating, format by format, whether formats of image data are supportable by the connected apparatus; information on a format of image data convertible in the connected apparatus; information on compression of the convertible format of image data; and information as to whether the formats of image data are convertible by hardware in the connected apparatus.

7. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format information

acquisition part stores the acquired format
information based on a unit of the connected
apparatus.

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8.   The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 1, wherein said format determination part
10   determines a format of image data with the highest
compression rate from the acquired format information
as the transfer-time format of the image data to be
transferred to the connected apparatus.

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9.   The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 1, wherein said format information
20   acquisition part acquires the format information from
the connected apparatus at a time of activation of
the image-forming apparatus.

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10. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 9, further comprising an evaluation part that evaluates the connected apparatus independently based on the format information acquired therefrom.

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11. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein a result of the evaluation by said evaluation part is displayed to an operator.

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12. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein a result of the evaluation by said evaluation part is displayed on the image-forming apparatus.

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13. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 9, further comprising an evaluation part

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that evaluates each of apparatuses connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part independently based on the format information acquired therefrom.

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14.   The image-forming apparatus as claimed
10   in claim 1, wherein said format determination part determines a reversible compression format from the acquired format information as the transfer-time format of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus.

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15.   The image-forming apparatus as claimed
20   in claim 1, wherein said format information acquisition part acquires the format information from the connected apparatus at a time of transferring the image data thereto.

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16.   The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein said format information acquisition part acquires the format information from the connected apparatus when an operator determines
5   that the image data is to be transferred.

10   17.   The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 15, further comprising an image quality selection part that determines whether to transfer the image data with high image quality to the connected apparatus.

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18.   The image-forming apparatus as claimed
20   in claim 17, wherein said format determination part determines a reversible compression format from the acquired format information as the transfer-time format of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus when said image quality selection
25   part determines that the image data is to be

transferred with high image quality to the connected

apparatus.

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19.   The image-forming apparatus as claimed

in claim 15, further comprising an image quality

selection part that selects a level of image quality

10   at which the image data is transferred to the

connected apparatus.

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20.   The image-forming apparatus as claimed

in claim 15, wherein said format determination part

determines whether to transfer the image data with a

single format when the image data is to be

20   transferred to a plurality of apparatuses connected

to the image-forming apparatus via the communication

part.

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21. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 20, wherein said format determination part transfers the image data to the connected apparatuses with the image data remaining unconverted when the image data is prevented from being transferred to the connected apparatuses with the single format.

22. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the apparatus is connected to the image-forming apparatus through a network.

23. An image-forming apparatus with a hardware resource used for image formation, a program for performing processing related to the image formation, and a communication part, the image-forming apparatus comprising:

a format information generation part that generates format information including a format of image data supportable by the image-forming

apparatus;

a format information supply part that
supplies the generated format information to an
apparatus connected to the image-forming apparatus
5   via the communication part; and

an image data conversion part that converts
image data received from the connected apparatus in
accordance with a format of the received image data.

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24. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 23, wherein said format information includes
15   at least one of: information indicating, format by
format, whether formats of image data are supportable
by the image-forming apparatus; information on a
format of image data convertible in the image-forming
apparatus; information on compression of the
20   convertible format of image data; and information as
to whether the formats of image data are convertible
by hardware in the image-forming apparatus.

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25. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 23, wherein the apparatus is connected to the image-forming apparatus through a network.

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26. An image data transfer method of an image-forming apparatus with a hardware resource used for image formation, a program for performing processing related to the image formation, and a communication part, the image data transfer method comprising the steps of:

(a) acquiring format information from an apparatus connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part, the format information including information on a format of image data supportable by the connected apparatus;

(b) determining a transfer-time format of image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus based on the acquired format information; and

(c) performing format conversion of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus in accordance with the determined transfer-

time format of the image data.

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27.   The image data transfer method as
claimed in claim 26, wherein said step (a) acquires
the format information from the connected apparatus
at a time of activation of the image-forming

10   apparatus.

15   28.   The image data transfer method as
claimed in claim 26, wherein said step (a) acquires
the format information from the connected apparatus
at a time of transferring the image data thereto.

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29.   The image data transfer method as
claimed in claim 26, wherein the apparatus is

25   connected to the image-forming apparatus through a

network.

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30. A method of transferring image data
between first and second image-forming apparatuses
connected via a network, the method comprising the
steps of:

10 (a) the first image-forming apparatus
generating format information including a format of
image data supportable by the first image-forming
apparatus;

(b) the second image-forming apparatus
15 acquiring the format information from the first
image-forming apparatus via the network;

(c) the second image-forming apparatus
determining a transfer-time format of image data to
be transferred to the first image-forming apparatus
20 via the network based on the acquired format
information; and

(d) the second image-forming apparatus
performing format conversion of the image data to be
transferred to the first image-forming apparatus via
25 the network in accordance with the determined

transfer-time format of the image data.